

ii. The subsequent attainment of the path of seeing

The subsequent attainment of the path of seeing refers to any path of seeing that does not directly realize emptiness. It arises subsequent to the meditative equipoises that serve as the direct antidote to intellectually acquired obstructions (i.e. the uninterrupted path of the path of seeing and the path of release of the path of seeing), which is the reason for why it is called '*subsequent attainment*'.

Examples for subsequent attainments of the path of seeing are Bodhicitta, compassion, generosity, patience, the wisdom that directly realizes subtle impermanence, the wisdom that realizes emptiness conceptually, etc. in the continua of Bodhisattvas on the path of seeing.

As mentioned above, during the stage of subsequent attainments of the path of seeing sometimes also meditative equipoises that are neither uninterrupted paths nor paths of release may arise. They arise when Bodhisattvas on the path of seeing enter the meditative equipoise that directly realize emptiness without being able to eliminate any of the obstructions.

The following chart presents the different stages or periods of the path of seeing with the first stage of the meditative equipoise consisting of the uninterrupted path and the path of release. Following that is the stage of the subsequent attainment with the occasional and intermittent arising of meditative equipoises that are neither uninterrupted paths nor paths of release (here in the chart illustrated by merely one instance of such meditative equipoise):

Stage of the meditative equipoise of the path of seeing		Stage of the subsequent attainment of the path of seeing		
<i>Uninterrupted path (of the path of seeing)</i>	<i>Path of release (of the path of seeing)</i>	<i>Subsequent attainment (of the path of seeing)</i>	<i>Meditative equipoise that is neither...</i>	<i>Subsequent attainment (of the path of seeing)</i>
↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
A path of seeing that directly realizes emptiness and that eliminates intellectually acquired obstructions	A path of seeing that directly realizes emptiness and that attains the cessation of intellectually acquired obstructions	A path of seeing that does not realize emptiness directly, e.g. Bodhicitta, compassion, etc.	A path of seeing that directly realizes emptiness but that is not a direct antidote to any of the obstructions	A path of seeing that does not realize emptiness directly, e.g. Bodhicitta, compassion, etc.

The most frequently discussed and debated stage of the path of seeing is the stage of the meditative equipoise that consists of the uninterrupted path and the path of release.

An important concept related to these two types of meditative equipoise is the concept of the *sixteen instants of the path of seeing*, an explanation of which follows next in order to understand the presentations of the path of seeing that are given in Haribhadra's ***Commentary Illuminating the Meaning***, Gyaltsab je's ***Ornament of the Essence***, and Lama Tsongkhapa's Golden Rosary (cited below the explanation of the *sixteen instants*).

THE SIXTEEN INSTANTS OF THE PATH OF SEEING

The sixteen instants of the path of seeing constitute:

- i. the *eight forbearances* and
- ii. the *eight knowledges*,
with the uninterrupted path of seeing corresponding to the *eight forbearances* and the path of release corresponding to the *eight knowledges*.

Eight forbearances

The uninterrupted path and the path of release are both, as explained above, meditative equipoises that directly realize the lack of true existence of *all* phenomena (i.e. of everything that exists). This means that these two types of awareness focus on all phenomena and directly realize all phenomena's emptiness. As the four noble truths are included in 'all phenomena' the two meditative equipoises also focus on truths

of sufferings and directly realize truths of suffering's emptiness, they focus on truths of origin and directly realize truths of origin's emptiness, they focus on truths of cessation and directly realize truths of cessation's emptiness, and they focus on truths of the path and directly realize truths of the path's emptiness.

Furthermore, since there are four noble truths that pertain to the *Desire Realm* and four noble truths that pertain to the *Higher Realms* (the Form and Formless Realms), this distinction is also made when presenting the focal objects of the uninterrupted path and the path of release. Therefore, the two meditative equipoises focus on truths of suffering that pertain to the *Desire Realm* and realize the emptiness of truths of suffering that pertain to the *Desire Realm*, they focus on truths of suffering that pertain to the *Higher Realms* (Form and Formless Realms) and realize the emptiness of truths of suffering that pertain to the *Higher Realms*, they focus on truths of origin that pertain to the *Desire Realm* and realize the emptiness of truths of origin that pertain to the *Desire Realm*, and so forth.

The uninterrupted path of seeing hence focuses on the following eight phenomena:

- 1) truths of **suffering** that pertain to the **Desire Realm**
 - 2) truths of **suffering** that pertain to the **Higher Realms** (Form and Formless Realms)
 - 3) truths of **origin** that pertain to the **Desire Realm**
 - 4) truths of **origin** that pertain to the **Higher Realms**
 - 5) truths of **cessation** that pertain to the **Desire Realm**
 - 6) truths of **cessation** that pertain to the **Higher Realms**
 - 7) truths of the **path** that pertain to the **Desire Realm**
 - 8) truths of the **path** that pertain to the **Higher Realms**
- and realizes the lack of true existence of these eight phenomena (as well as of all other phenomena).

Therefore, from the perspective of focusing on (1) truths of suffering that pertain to the *Desire Realm*, (2) truths of origin that pertain to the *Desire Realm*, (3) truths of cessation that pertain to the *Desire Realm*, and (4) truths of the path that pertain to the *Desire Realm*, uninterrupted paths are called: '**Dharma-forbearance**'.

From the perspective of focusing on (1) truths of suffering that pertain to the *Higher Realms*, (2) truths of origin that pertain to the *Higher Realms*, (3) truths of cessation that pertain to the *Higher Realms*, and (4) truths of the path that pertain to the *Higher Realms*, uninterrupted paths are called: '**subsequent-forbearance**'.

This is why the uninterrupted path, as mentioned above, corresponds to *eight forbearances*, for it corresponds to four **Dharma-forbearances** and four **subsequent-forbearances**.

In brief, the four **Dharma-forbearances** of the uninterrupted path of seeing are:

1. The uninterrupted path from the perspective of directly realizing the lack of true existence of truths of suffering that pertain to the *Desire Realm*
2. The uninterrupted path from the perspective of directly realizing the lack of true existence of truths of origin that pertain to the *Desire Realm*
3. The uninterrupted path from the perspective of directly realizing the lack of true existence of truths of cessation that pertain to the *Desire Realm*
4. The uninterrupted path from the perspective of directly realizing the lack of true existence of truths of the path that pertain to the *Desire Realm*

The four **subsequent-forbearances** of the uninterrupted path of seeing are:

1. The uninterrupted path from the perspective of directly realizing the lack of true existence of truths of suffering that pertain to the *Higher Realms*
2. The uninterrupted path from the perspective of directly realizing the lack of true existence of truths of origin that pertain to the *Higher Realms*
3. The uninterrupted path from the perspective of directly realizing the lack of true existence of truths of cessation that pertain to the *Higher Realms*
4. The uninterrupted path from the perspective of directly realizing the lack of true existence of truths of the path that pertain to the *Higher Realms*

